

REMARKS

Applicants have canceled Claims 21-24 and therefore, upon entry of this amendment, Claims 1-15 and 25-27 are pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of the application.

Examiner acknowledged Applicant's election of Group 1, Claims 1-15, but indicated that Applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement. Applicants disagree as the errors in the restriction requirement were distinctly and specifically identified to the extent possible in the filed response to the restriction requirement. Specifically, Applicants noted that Claims 21-24 were directed to a circuit (rather than a method as indicated by Examiner) having similar particulars to those found in Claims 1-15 and would require the same identical search and general classification. Thus, neither prong of the test under MPEP § 806.05(c) cited by Examiner was met and, as such, the restriction requirement was improper. Consequently, Applicants reserve the right to petition the Director to review (MPEP § 818.03(c)).

Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,479,975 to Plankensteiner et al. [herein referred to as "Plankensteiner"].

Plankensteiner discloses a current sense circuit having a constant current source, a sense transistor M_{SENSE} , and a comparator to sense a load current through a transistor M_{OUT} (e.g., Figs. 2-5, col. 3, lns. 20-26). In particular, the sense transistor is isolated from the load, does not connect the load to a sense terminal of the power supply, and is coupled to a different power supply voltage (V_{DD}) than is applied to the load (i.e., power supply voltage V_{EXT}). Thus, Plankensteiner is quite different than what is disclosed and claimed in the present application. Specifically, as an example, Plankensteiner fails to teach or suggest "a second transistor adapted to connect a sense terminal of the first power supply to the first load" as recited in Claim 1.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Plankensteiner and that corresponding dependent claims are also distinguishable for at least the same reasons. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) of Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 9 be withdrawn.

Claims 3, 8, and 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Plankensteiner in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,693,410 to Terrien [herein referred to as "Terrien"].

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Plankensteiner fails to teach or suggest various aspects of the present invention, as discussed above, and Terrien fails to cure these deficiencies. Specifically, as an example, Plankensteiner and Terrien fail to teach or suggest "a second transistor adapted to connect a sense terminal of the first power supply to the first load" as recited in Claim 1 or "a second transistor coupled to a sense terminal of the power supply and to the load" as recited in Claim 10.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1 and 10 patentably distinguish over Plankensteiner in view of Terrien and that corresponding dependent claims are also distinguishable for at least the same reasons. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claims 3, 8, and 10-13 be withdrawn.

Claims 4, 5, 14, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Plankensteiner. As noted above, Plankensteiner fails to teach or suggest various aspects of the present invention. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1 and 10 patentably distinguish over Plankensteiner and that corresponding dependent claims are also distinguishable for at least the same reasons.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claims 4, 5, 14, and 15 be withdrawn.

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In the response to the restriction requirement, Applicants added new Claims 25-27. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added and that support may be found, for example, in Figs. 2 and 3 and the corresponding text. Applicants further submit that Claims 25-27 are distinguishable from the cited prior art, for reasons similar to those discussed herein, and are in condition for allowance.

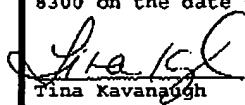
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-15 and 25-27 are in proper form for allowance.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested and a timely Notice of Allowance is solicited.

If there are any questions regarding any aspect of the application, please call the undersigned at (949) 752-7040.

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Respectfully submitted,


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